

critical digest

139 East 47 St. NY 17 NY
EL 5-6894 T.M. Kraus



Feb 27, 1957 Vol IX No 15 The Weekly NYC Theatre Newsletter Digest-10th yr-\$25 a year

This Week

The Hellinger Theatre has been purchased by Max and Stanley Stahl from Anthony Farrell for \$3 million. The Stahl's are NY realtors owning an estimated \$10 million of NY real estate. A \$200,000 deposit was made last week, the first part of a \$750,000 down payment. House currently is host to My Fair Lady.

Plays

Mr. Wonderful closed after 383 performances... Barrault-Renaud troupe finished NY engagement and now go on short USA tour... Washington Birthday matinee business reported brisk with standees at nine shows... \$9.20 top set for New Girl in Town... Musical version of Dodsworth planned by Jule Styne... Destry Was Here musical by Harold Rome planned for next season.

Players

Julie Andrews to vacation from My Fair Lady for two weeks starting March 25, Lola Fisher to sub... Gene Saks replacing Martin Balsam, Middle of Night... Louise Latham succeeds Sally Gracie, Major Barbara... Lena Horne to star in Jamaica, musical comedy, by Arlen Harburg-Saldy next season... Joshua Logan to direct Children's Comedy next season... Helen Gallagher and Sloan Simpson to be featured in Brigadoon at CityCenter... Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy star in The Beggar's Opera at City Center... Walter Pritchard, Eaton, 78, drama critic of NY Herald and NY Sun, died. He was author of many books on drama and a professor at Yale.

Calendar

A Hole in the Head-Plymouth 2/28 Producers Theatre and Robert Whitehead present Arnold Schulman play with Paul Douglas... Ziegfeld Follies-Winter Garden 3/1. Kroll and Conaway present new revue with Beatrice Lillie, Billy de Wolfe... Right You Are-If You Think You Are-Carl Fischer Hall-165 W 57- 3/4... J E Schanker presents revival of Pirandello comedy with Erik Rhodes.

Summer Playhouses

3 packages of New Faces to be offered summer producers by Howard Hoyt-companies aimed at regular barns, musical tents, and outdoor city theatres... \$3000 top for stars set by Stock Theatre Managers... Northland Playhouse Detroit, to follow suggestions of patrons on physical changes this summer.

Shakespeare Festivals

Katharine Hepburn to star in Stratford, Conn, production of Much Ado About Nothing and in one other play to be announced. Alfred Drake will be in Much Ado About Nothing, as well as in Othello.

Other Broadways

My Fair Lady second company opens March 18 in Rochester; Brian Aherne and Anne Rogers featured... Mary Martin to appear in west coast revivals of Annie Get Your Gun and South Pacific... New American Theatre opened Rome series with Picnic.

Theatre TV Notes

Salute to Lerner-Loewe on first anniversary of My Fair Lady on CBS-TV Ed Sullivan March 3.

Digests of Current NYC Theatre Reviews

The Taming of the Shrew-Phoenix 2/20. 4 pro notices and 3 con notices--Times, H. Tribune, World Telegram & Sun- filed on American Shakespeare Festival Theatre production of this past summer's Stratford, Conn. presentation. Nina Foch, Pernell Roberts, Morris Carnovsky repeated their roles, while Philip Bourneuf replaced Fritz Weaver as Gremio. The same lusty version as this summer's, cheered Chapman, News. A field day of slapstick acted with relish, agreed Coleman, Mirror. McClain, Journal American, noted slightly less freedom of movement in the NY production, but otherwise he thought the production still retains the vigor and abandon of the version offered in the sticks. He doubts if we shall ever see this rather baffling and bawdy classic performed by a more competent cast. Every bit as gay, fresh and brightly imaginative as it seemed this summer, concluded Watts, Post. Con side headed by Atkinson, Times, who panned it for over-direction which overwhelmed the intelligible movements. The taming of the director, was suggested. Kerr, Herald Tribune, panned all actors except Hiram Sherman (who gave a 3 minute lecture on Stratford, Conn prior to opening) for not being real comics at heart. Donnelley, WT&S, admitted that he and "The Shrew" after several bouts were incompatible.

The Lady's Not for Burning- Carnegie Hall Playhouse 2/21. 4 pro notices--Times, H. Tribune, Mirror, Post- greeted Earl-James revival of Christopher Fry play featuring Margaret Phillips. All notices were mild. Calt, Times, feared production lacked the indispensable high acting style and intellectual gusto of Broadway original, but still found play rewarding to listen to for the richness of Fry's language. A fairly interesting venture, he summed up. It comes near to being distinguished, an illuminating introduction to the Fry play, added Beckley, Herald Tribune. 1950 prize play is still rewarding and enjoyable at second hearing, commented Coleman, Mirror, who listed play as one of Off-Broadway's tastier dishes. Herridge, Post, thought that except for Henry Brandon the rest of the cast is good enough to again bewitch audiences.

Enemies Don't Send Flowers and A God Slept Here-Provincetown 2/19. 1 pro notice- Gelb, Times- and 3 con notices- Tribune, Post and WT&S- listed for two Brazilian plays presented by John Fostini. Times man enjoyed latter play, as an often uproariously funny burlesque of the Amphitryon theme. Cast headed by Peter Donat and Michael Lerner (Mrs. Donat) was applauded. He marked off former play as an over-long monologue, but thought plays balanced out favorably. Con notices generally approved acting, but disliked prize winning scripts. Humor is obvious and repetitive in second play, stated Herridge, Post. Typical approach to Greek legend, noted Donnelley, WT&S. While Beckley, Herald Tribune, marked effort as somewhere between not good and not bad. All noted approvingly the Brazilian coffee served at the intermission.

The Anatomist- Royal 62 E 4 2/26 . 2 con votes- Times and Post- filed against revival of Restoration play by Edward Ravenscroft. Play said to have been one of the first produced in US, in 1752 at Williamsburg, Va by Hallams Company, is of little intrinsic importance, merely a dull, routine burlesque, panned Calt, Times. While Herridge, Post, billed it as one of the noisiest productions to date. Costumes by Margareta Maganini received chief praise from both reviewers. Cast was accused of overacting.

Utopia, Ltd- Shakespearewrights -264 W 87-2/26 . 5 pro votes and 1 con- WT&S- noted for American Savoyards presentation of seldom done Gilbert & Sullivan musical. Libretto by Gilbert and fine acting by Dorothy Raedler's company scored better than Sullivan's music. It has the grace and daintiness of a perfectly wrought miniature, held up to ridicule by two master craftsmen, summed up Atkinson, Times. Even if not a G & S fan, the pleasures will outweigh the pauses, bets Kerr, Herald Tribune. Con view listed by WT&S aisle-sitter because he feared that current production is not best the work can have.

London Theatre



Plays

Zulieka Dobson, the musical version of Max Beerbohm's story, to be presented at Opera House, Manchester, March 5 prior to London opening. Diane Cilento has the title role, and David Morton, Philip Bond and Wilma Ann Leslie are in the cast.

Players

Sheelagh Aldrich, an understudy, subbed for Janet Pavek, Fanny, while latter ill from flu... David Hurst subbing for Peter Ustinov, Romanoff and Juliet, star suffering from slipped disc... Sybil Thorndike and Lewis Casson to appear in The Chalk Garden in Sydney in fall.

Club Theatres

English Stage Society to present Ionesco's The Chair... English adaptation of German play The Cardinal presented at Cambridge Arts featuring George Curzon... Ibsen's Rosersholm to be presented in round by Oxford and New College Dramatic Societies.

London Theatre TV

Our Town presented on BBC-TV with John Welsh in lead... Sheffield Playhouse presented production of N. C. Hunter's new play A Picture of Autumn on BBC TV.

British Books

"On the Art of Theatre" by Edward Gordon Craig published by Windmill Press.

For Stage Struck Only



*This weekly NYC newsletter digests---Complete theatre news(page 1), reviews of all openings(page 2), comments by critics(page 6.)

* Plus NYC critics suggestions on theatre books, records. (page 7.)



* Plus Off Broadway and Full Summer Theatre coverage (page 7). London (page 3.)

* Plus complete business & critical data on all current shows(page 4 & 5.)

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CRITICAL DIGEST---139 E 47, NYC.

 Feb 22, 1957 PLAYGOERS GUIDE chart of CRITICAL DIGEST, 139 E 47, NYC-EL 5-6894

This weekly chart of CRITICAL DIGEST, the weekly NYC theatre newsletter, presents up-to-the-minute data on current business and critical reception of all current Broadway and Off Broadway shows. Subscribers to CRITICAL DIGEST may write or phone for any other specific data or for late reviews.

"C"- Critics-figures refer to percentage of PRO reviews filed by NYC daily drama critics. PRO means show was recommended as entertaining and/or stimulating, not if critic predicted if show should be a hit.

"B"-Business- figures refer to percentage of gross ticket sales of past week and preceding weeks. "B" figure refers to past week's attendance. "Cap"- figure refers to capacity of house. Figures that follow are gross earnings for past week. "Cap \$4-\$34-\$30" means that capacity of house is \$41,000, that past week's gross was \$34,000 and week before \$30,000, etc.

AUNTIE MAME 238 W 44 100% C- Mostly for R. Russell 0% C Minus Her
 Broadhurst \$5.75 100% B- Cap \$43--\$43 \$43 \$43 \$43 \$43 \$43

BELLS ARE RINGING 230 W 44 80% C-2 Con show, Times, WT &S, 100% C-Judy
 Shubert \$7.50 CI 6-5990 100% B- Cap \$55--\$55 \$55 \$55 \$55 \$55 \$55

DIARY A. FRANK 229 W 49 100% C- Unanimous praise Pulitzer prizor
 Ambassador \$5.75 CO 5-1855 55% B- Last week- Moved to Ambassador.

DAMN YANKEE 226 W 46 100% C- Unanimous praise for music & cast
 46th St \$6.05 CI 6-4271 65% B- Cap \$50--\$34 \$34 \$37 \$41 \$33 \$30 \$40

HAPPIEST MILLION, 150 W 45 60% C- 3 Con- Trib, Post, J. Amer.
 Lyceum \$5.75 JU 2-3897 90% B- Cap \$26--\$23 \$23 \$23 \$23 \$23 \$19 \$24

HAPPY HUNTING 245 W 44 100% C-for Meriman- 10% C- Mirror, sole show.
 Majestic \$6.05 CI 6-0730 \$100 B- Cap \$70--\$70 \$70 \$70 \$70 \$70 \$70 \$70

HIDDEN RIVER 137 W 48 90% C- 1 Con- Mirror
 Playhouse \$5.75 CI 5-6060 65% B- Cap \$30--\$17 \$19 \$20 \$17

HOLIDAY LOVERS 249 W 48 20% C- 2 Pro- Post, J. Am.
 Longacre \$5.75 CI 6-5639 100% B- Cap \$30-- \$30

INHERIT WIND 208 W 41 90% C- Funke, sole, con vote-Times
 National \$5.75 PE 6-3220 70% B- Cap \$30--\$22 \$21 \$25 \$25 \$20 \$21 \$25

JERRY LEWIS 1544 Bway 40% C-Lewis-Trib, Post, J. Am--100% Vaude
 Palace \$6 PL 7-2626 100% B- Cap \$60--\$60 \$60 \$60

LIL ABNER 235 W 44 60% C- 3 Con- Trib, J. Am, WT & S
 St James \$8.05 LA 4-4664 100% B- Cap \$58--\$58 \$58 \$58 \$58 \$58 \$58 \$58

LONG DAYS 230 W 46 100% C- Unanimous raves for Oneill drama-cast
 Hayes \$6.90 CI 6-6380 100% B- Cap \$30--\$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30

MAJOR BARBARA 245 W 45 70% C- 2 Cons- Times, H. Trib
 Morocco \$6.90 CI 6-6230 85% B- Cap \$37--\$28 \$29 \$31 \$35 \$34 \$31 \$30

MIDDLE NIGHT 230 W 52 20% C- 2 Pro Play-Mir. J. Am-100% C-Robinson
 Auta \$5.75 CI 6-8870 70% B- Cap \$40--\$26 \$28 \$27 \$31 \$27 \$29 \$26

MOST HAPPY FELLA 249 W 45 90% C- 1 Con- H. Trib
 Imperial \$7.50 CO 5-5412 80% B- Cap \$57--\$48 \$50 \$54 \$57 \$53 \$52 \$57

MY FAIR LADY 1655 Bway 100% C- Unanimous raves for hit musical
 Hellinger \$6.05 PL 7-7064 100% B- Cap \$64--\$64 \$64 \$64 \$64 \$64 \$64 \$64

NO TIME SOTS, 249 W 52 100% C- Unanimous praise for solidier comedy
 Alvin \$5.75 CI 5-5226 80% B- Cap \$38--\$30 \$30 \$32 \$33 \$27 \$29 \$32

POTTING SHED 209 W 45 100% C- Unanimous praise for play-cast
 Bijou \$5.25 JU 6-5442 85% B- Cap \$20--\$18 \$17 \$17

SEPARATE TABLES 239 W 45 100% C- Unanimous praise for Eng. twin-bill
 Music Box \$5.75 CI 6-4636 90% B- Cap \$31-- \$26 \$27 \$28 \$28 \$29 \$25 \$29

TUNNEL OF LOVE 239 W 45 30% C- 2 Pro- Trib, News,
 Royale \$5.75 CI 6-8870 100% B- Cap \$29--\$29

VISIT S. PLANET 231 W 45 100% C- Mostly for Richard-Mayehoff antia
 Booth \$5.75 CI 6-5969 100% B- Cap \$27--\$27 \$27

UNCLE WILLIE 252 W 45 100% C-Skunk, 0% C- Minus Him,
 Golden \$5.75 CI 6-6740 70% B- Cap \$24--\$15 \$15 \$17 \$17 \$19 \$14 \$15

WALTZ OF TOR, 259 W 49 90% C- 1 Con- WT & S
 Coronet \$5.75 CI 6-8870 75% B- Cap \$35--\$27 \$27 \$31 \$30

"RATINGS OF NYC CRITICS"

1956-57 season ratings of NYC drama critics on CURRENT Broadway shows by CRITICAL DIGEST. "55%" figures are percentages of pro votes in comparison to con votes on current shows. Variety 1954-55 and 1955-56 season figures are percentages of favorable reviews for entire season.

| 24 shows | CD % | PROS | CONS | Variety 1955-56 | 1954-55 |
|------------------|------|------|------|-----------------|---------|
| Alkington, Times | 75% | 18 | 6 | .490 | .607 |
| Kerr, H. Trib | 80% | 19 | 5 | .394 | .354 |
| Chapman, News | 90% | 22 | 2 | .527 | .580 |
| Coleman, Mirror | 85% | 20 | 4 | .454 | .566 |
| Watts, Post | 90% | 22 | 2 | .541 | .426 |
| McClain, J. Am. | 80% | 19 | 3 | .535 | .532 |
| Domindly, WT & S | 75% | 18 | 6 | .306 | .549 |
| (Hawkins 1955) | | | | | |

" OFF BROADWAY "

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| ANATOMIST Royal \$2 | 62 E 4 GR 5-9647 | 2 Con- Times, Post | Anatomist- Royal 2/26 Clivers & Sullivan- Shakespeare 2/26 Dorsey & Hinton- T. Temp 2/27 Hole in Head- Plymouth 2/28 Ziegfeld Follies- W. Garden 3/1 |
| BOX WATERCOLORS Bway Chapel | 56 & Bway CI 7-0387 | 2 Con- Times, Variety SUNDAYS Only 5 PM | Right You Are- Fischer Hall 3/4 3 Sygne Plays- Theatre East 3/6 Good as Gold- Belasco 3/7 Exiles- Renata - 3/12 Wedding in Japan- Greystone 3/12 Sin of Fat Muldoon- Cort 3/13 Beggars Opera- City Center 3/13 Malden Voyage- Barrymore 3/14 Land Beyond River- G. Mews 3/15 |
| DOCTOR FAUSTUS Blackfriars \$2.60 | 316 W 57 CI 7-0236 | 2 Pro- Times, J. Am 1 Con- Post | Trojan Women- Theatre Marquee- 3/18 Duchess of Malfi- Phoenix 3/19 Shaving up of Bianco- Provincetown 3/19 Cyrano de Bergerac- Beck 3/21 Hide & Seek 3/25 Brigadoon- City Center 3/27 |
| ENEMIES DONT SEND Provincetown \$2.50 | 133 MacD. GR 7-9894 | 3 Con- Trib, Post, Wor-Tel-Sun | |
| ICEMAN COMETH Circle \$3.60 | 5 Sher Sq OR 5-9437 | 6 Pro-Times, Trib, Mir, J. Am, Post, WT&S | |
| IN KING CHARLES Downtown \$3.45 | 85 E 4 OR 3-4412 | 6 Pro-Times, Trib, Post, WT&S, Mirr, Variety | |
| LADYS NOT FOR BUR. Carn. Play \$3.60 | 56 & Bway CI 6-6630 | 4 Pro-Times, Trib, Mir, Post | |
| ME CANDIDO G. Mews | 131 W 13 CH 2-7831 | 5 Pro-Times, Trib, Post, Variety, Women War | |
| PURPLE DUST Cherry Lane \$3.85 | 31 Commerce CH 2-4468 | 4 Pro-Times, Trib, Post, WT &S 2 Con- News, J. Am. | |
| TAKE GIANT STEP Jan Hus \$3.45 | LY 6-8947 351 E 74 | 5 Pro-Times, Trib, Post, Variety, Women War 1 Con- J. Am. | |
| TAMING SHREW Phoenix \$3.45 | 2nd & 12th AL 4-0525 | 4 Pro-Times, Mir, Post, J. Am. 3 Con- Times, Trib, WT & S | |
| 3 PENNY OPERA De Lys \$4.85 | 121 Chris. WA 4-8782 | 3 Pro-Times, Trib, Post | |
| UTOPIA, LTD Shakesp. \$3.45 | 264 W 87 SU 72277 | 5 Pro-Times, Trib, Post, J. Am, WT & S | |
| VOLPONE Rooftop \$3.60 | 131 E Houston GR 7-8320 | 4 Pro-Times, Mir, WT & S, Women War 4 Con- Trib, Post, News, Var. | |

" THEATRE CALENDAR "

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Apollon of Bellac-Carn Play 4/2 | Hotel Vendue-Miller 4/3 | MacAs- 4/3 | The Joker- 4/4 | Shinbone Alley-Broadway 4/13 | Tom Sawyer- Phoenix 4/18 | Liberace- Palace- 4/20 | Packaged in Paris- 4/22? | First Gentleman 4/25 | Moon for Misbegotten-Bijou 4/30 | Foolin Ourselves- 4/? | New Girl in Town- 46th St- 5/6/ | The Egghead- 9/26 | Romanoff and Juliet- 9/27 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|

" TV THEATRE PROGRAMS "

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| Mar 1- NBC- Shadow and Sub stance - on Matinee Theatre | Mar 3- CBS- My Fair Lady- Salute- on Ed Sullivan | Mar 4- NBC- Romeo & Juliet with Old Vic on Producers Showcase | Mar 4- NBC- You Told Me with Oscar Homolka on Matinee Theatre | Mar 7- CBS- Charleys Aunt on Playhouse 90 | Mar 17- NBC- There Shall Be No Night with K. Cornell on Hallmark | Mar 31- NBC- Cinderella by Rodgers & Hammerstein with Julie Andrews | Apr 1- NBC- Great Sebastians- with Lunts on Producers Showcase | Apr 1- NBC- Victoria Regina- with Lunts on Producers Showcase | Apr 10- NBC- Y. G. Cousins with Alfred Drake on Hallmark | May 11- NBC- George M. Cohan Story with Mickey Rooney |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|

" CD VIEWS ON CURRENT SHOWS "

| | |
|-------|---|
| PROS: | Damn Yankees, Diary Anne Frank, Happiest Millionaire, Hidden River Inherit the Wind, Long Days Journey, Most Happy Fella, Potting Shed, Separate Tables, Tunnel of Love, Uncle Willie, Walts of Toreadors Iceman Cometh, Me Candido, Purple Dust, Take Giant Step, In King Charles |
| CONS: | Holiday for Lovers, Middle Night Volpone |



GREEN
ROOM
DEPARTMENT

ANGEL ANTIDOTE... A unique angel-investing idea was forwarded by Arnold Maremont in Saturday Review. Knowing that most of their legit investments will lose money, he suggests that funds instead be given to a non-profit corporation. The corporation would then give needed production money to a producer. Latter will receive 10% of net weekly income until corporation is paid back, and 50% after that period. He also will then receive the amount of the money contributed initially to put on the play and 90% of all money earned by him to produce more plays. The other 10% will be retained to aid new producers.

COLUMN TIPS... Judy Holliday would like to appear in Laurette, adaption of book about Laurette Taylor, hears Parsons... Show backers want in on Romanoff and Juliet notes Winchell... Libby Holman would like to back play starring Montgomery Clift, reports Kilgallen.

CRITICS PROBLEMS... The idea that a reviewer should cover a play from the first day of conception was vetoed by McClain, Journal American, who merely points out that for such a program there isn't enough critics to go round... Holiday for Lovers press-agent warned by Chapman, News, that unless misquote ho from him is dropped from ads, he will run a daily paragraph explaining that he meant show was an "absolutely perfect comedy of its kind", not an "Absolutely Perfect Comedy!"

DRAMA MAIL BOX... Mrs. Jacob K. Javits, wife of NY Senator, and Mrs Harold Rome, wife of author, filed a rave-letter for Holiday for Lovers in Times... Agent Gloria Safier noted in Variety that actors should be allowed to have exclusive agents if they so desire... An "On-Broadway" showcase for the best of the Off-Broadway shows suggested as possible City Center summer program by a C. D. subscriber.

CRITICAL THOUGHTS... Student ticket program lagging mostly because the majority of producers are ignoring it, Booth, Times, survey charged... If only for giving us The Iceman Cometh and Purple Dust, off-Broadway theatre has recently more than justified its existence, lauds Watts, Post.

SECOND GUESSES... The idea that the Broadway theatre has risen above the one-joke play is funnier than anything in Tunnel of Love, sighs, Donnelley, World Telegram-Sun... Tunnel of Love needs a change of task, added Kerr, Herald Tribune. Things would go faster and funnier if both players and playwright weren't pausing expectantly for laughs at the end of every insistent jape.

INTERVIEW HI-LITES... Hollywood players competent enough to appear on Broadway can be counted on the fingers of both hands, Paul Douglas, Hole in Head, told Ross, Herald Tribune. Actor also predicted that movies will end up as an auxilliary to the stage and TV. He turned down four film offers to do the play because he felt after 23 pictures it was time to get back to the theatre and do some work.



OFF BROADWAY

A House Remembered closed at Actors Playhouse... Mrs. Patterson closes this week-end at Davenport... The Lady's Not for Burning to leave Carnegie Hall Playhouse March 31, and is seeking another house. ..Twin-bill of Apollo of Bellac and The Virtuous Island opens April 2 at Carnegie Hall Playhouse with Martyn Green featured. ... The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnet by GBS to be presented March 19 at Provincetown Playhouse by Actors Mobile Theatre.

Clown Face, a new play for children by Austin O'Toole -to be presented for 3 week-ends at Theatre East-211 E 60- approved by Herridge, Post, as a charming and lively story, skillfully played.

Idiot's Delight revival of Sherwood play presented by Equity Community Theatre at Dewitt Clinton H. S., Bronx, was okayed by Funke, Times. Though staging a bit on static side, reviewer found play was not dated and remained interesting.

In Good King Charles' Golden Days at Downton adds another pro notice to its unanimous critical file. Coleman, Mirror, caught up with GBS antic and billed it as a scintillating caper with Shaw's witty observations on almost everything.

Anta's Double Bill at Theatre De Lys of Kafka's Metmorphosis and Pelleas and Melisande presented in "stylized acting and movement" was panned by Herridge, Post, and Catta, Times, as neither theatre nor dance.



THEATRE

BOOK

COMMENTS



"Beerbohm Tree" by Hesketh Pearson (Harper) is a satisfactory study of the great Edwardian actor-manager, okays Down, Variety. Result is readable, informative tome spotlighting 16 of Tree's great Shakespeare productions.

THEATRE

RECORD

COMMENTS

Happy Hunting original cast disc (Victor) score drew diverse comments from two reviewers. Variety mugg thought record brought Dubey-Karr score alive, while Kupferberg, Herald Tribune, thought tunes which are only presentable would be worthless minus Ethel Merman.

DRAMA

DESK

REPORTS



The "Festival" part of the American Shakespeare Festival and Academy was firmly established last year. Now the "Academy" portion of the Stratford, Conn. project is firmly established. Classes for 20 select students began this week in NY, offering 25 hours of courses. John Houseman and Jack Landau explained to February "Drama Desk" meeting that the plan is to turn out talented actors to enter their Shakespeare company. The eventual aim is to have a company of 30 to 40 players, with about 20 appearing at a given time in the Festival's diverse projects.



" PROS & CONS BY TMK "

Taming of the Shrew production of American Shakespeare Festival Theatre at Phoenix for limited run makes attending the Bard's play almost painless. It is certainly the perfect medicine for those who are so-sure they will never, but never, enjoy a Shakespeare play.

* *

Two Brazilian plays at Provincetown are on the elemental level of playwrighting by US standards. The first part of program is a monologue, ideal for actresses who like to make audiences suffer. The second play is a well-acted, but still sophomore essay on a Greek legend.

* *

Theatre reporting sometimes takes on the aspects of Washington political reporting. The sale of the Hellinger for \$3 million was confused as far as the newspaper reader was concerned for more than a week. A gossip columnist reported the sale two weeks ago, a newspaper reporter denied the sale took place, a trade paper story told who the theatre was not sold to, and another gossip columnist told who it was sold to. A week later the story was released complete, and it turned out that the second gossip columnist was correct. 'What paper do you read?'

* *

Off Broadway is defeating a major excuse for presenting their productions if they don't get their opening night date problems settled, and fast. NY critics, some eager and some not so eager to cover, Off Broadway wares, are stymied by the multiple opening menace.

* *

The plan detailed in Saturday Review(see page 6) for having legit investors probable losses go for the encouragement of new producers and/or more productions from current producers simply assumes that all angels want and like to lose at their theatre tries. While it is true that a certain group of confirmed angels invest year in and year out, an even larger number invest in particular play for diverse personal reasons. The over-all idea should always be to make theatre more like a business, instead of less like a business.

* *

It is deplorable to think that the members of the League of NY Theatres who so recently approved Kermit Bloomgarten's student-ticket plan have ignored it, as the informative Times survey points out. Granted that such a program takes a long, long time to work out, but if today's producers want to stay tomorrow's producers they must do their share in building tomorrow's audiences.

* *

Musical packages seem to be the fare served to summer theatre patrons this year. With so many houses set up for such productions, this might be the summer that a few original musicals may develop from the tents and barns.

* *

Good reviews or not--it was quite a literary week in the NY theatre. Fry, Shakespeare, Gilbert & Sullivan, and 2 prize-winning South American plays. And all Off-Broadway at moderate prices.

* *

